career as an engineer, takes it up. His hero is Gambetta, with whom he collaborated in the organisation of national defence after the fall of the Empire. Nowhere, except in the sparkling *Souvenirs* of Mme Adam, do we come so close to the great tribune who at the age of 32 became the symbol of France's will to live. There were four founders of the Third Republic, declares Freycinet—Thiers, Gambetta, Dufaure, Grdvy, but Gambetta was the biggest of them all. Thiers remained the Constitutional royalist that he had always been, accepting the Republic only because a monarchy was impossible. Freycinet, who is a kindly judge of men, liked and admired the old statesman, but he was never a disciple. Thiers had opposed the war of 1870, and he blamed Gambetta for prolonging a hopeless struggle. If peace had been made after Sedan, he argued, Bismarck's terms might have been less severe and perhaps Lorraine might have been saved. There were no direct contacts between the two patriots, but Freycinet, a devoted friend of the one and *persona g^ata* with the other, kept them to some extent in touch. Gambetta supported Thiers as the best bulwark against the Royalists. The Republic, he realised, needed time to take root, and he was too much of a statesman to force the pace. When Thiers fell in 1873 Gambetta shed no tears. Now, he declared, there were only the friends and enemies of the Republic, and he had no doubt about the outcome of the struggle. The first volume of the Memoirs closes with the crisis of 1877, when MacMahon dismissed the Jules Simon Ministry and summoned the Orleanist Due de Broglie to the helm. The *coup* was defeated, and the royalists never recovered from the blow. Gambetta's famous warning to the President, *II faut se soumettre ou se demetire>* was a

formula supplied by the author, who now found himself in the Dufaure Cabinet for the first time as Minister of Public Works. As a picture of the foundation of the Republic and the Gambetta circle this modest narrative is unsurpassed.

The second volume reveals, the white mouse, as he was called, at the height of his influence, for he was more* continuously in harness for the next fifteen years than any other statesman of the front rank. The first half of the book continues to be dominated by Gambetta, though he declined the invitation to join *Le Grand Ministire.* Though it had been agreed that he should have the War Office, the Premier changed his mind, and Freycinet, fearing the constant interference of his chief, refused the Foreign Office. Other leading Republi-